



Happiness Pony

WORCESTER: I Didn't Think I'd Live Here This Long.

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WEDNESDAY, JULY 31, 2013.

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HAPPINESS PONY Income Statement June 2013

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The Junk Playground

Søren Carl Theodor Marius Sørensen (1893–1979), professor of landscape architecture at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Copenhagen, could not design a playground that children actually liked. In his desperation, he took a note off of Tom Sawyer and filled an area with scraps of wood, bricks, metal, rope, nails, & tools so that children could build their own structures. His "junk playground" was the ancestor of the modern "adventure playground" movement. (*Shane Capra*)

What Should You Look For When Picking a Doctor?

BY ZACKARY BERGER, MD, PhD

Picking a doctor is not like choosing an ice cream flavor. But it's not like betting on a sports game either. When we set about choosing a physician (or whoever else, nurse practitioner or physician's assistant, who might act as our primary care provider), our personal preferences certainly come into play. We might want as our doctor a man or a woman, someone convenient by bus, someone younger or older. Some people, like it or not, prefer their doctor to be of a certain race—just like doctors treat their patients differently based on race. This is of course not my ideal but the fact of the matter. Even if we only have a limited choice of doctors covered by insurance, we might pick between the two or three available based solely on whim.

But what if we wanted to pick the best doctor available, the professional who is most likely to make us feel better? There is a plethora of information available online that purports to answer that question, from a simple Google of the doctor's name to a search in Physician Compare (the national database of doctors that accept Medicare), to records of physicians' prescription practices. Unfortunately, there is no foolproof way to link up this dense network of statistics to the results that actually matter to us: our health, happiness, satisfaction, and emotional needs, all of which we would like to see satisfied when we see our new doctor. There is no magic formula to predict which doctor is most likely to work well with you, the acolytes of Big Data and electronic medicine notwithstanding.

That is why choosing a doctor isn't like placing a bet: we might not be sure if we made the right choice even when we meet them for the first time. As in other relationships, the connection with our doctor (or nurse, or whoever) might take time to develop. While available information might help us weed out the true duds, realizing that a particular doctor seems to be doing well by us might be more like finding a fine wine than picking a tasty ice cream flavor: an acquired taste.

Zackary Berger, MD, PhD is the author of Talking To Your Doctor (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers), a guide to building a working relationship with a healthcare provider based on healthy communication. It's available at <http://talkingtoyourdoctor.org>. He has contributed to Happiness Pony since issue #1.



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"Variants of smart dumb also miss the point but in a different way. Tweek (McSweeney's, Miranda July, Ira Glass, David Byrne) feigns dumb but won't allow itself to be dumb, for fear that someone might actually think it's dumb, god forbid. Hipster appropriates chunks of dumb (trucker hats, facial hair, tattoos) but as a fashion trend, refuses to theorize its dumbness, thereby falling squarely into dumb dumb. Smart dumb refuses to commit to either one state or the other."
Kenneth Goldsmith

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Cat In The Hat and Curious George in Yiddish. yiddishcat.com

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News"
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ONE time when Dorothy Ann's mother and father went out to spend the evening, Dorothy Ann sat up late reading about the knights of King Arthur's Round Table. It was long after eight o'clock when she finished her chapter, at the end of which she had promised her mother she would go to bed.

"Oh, dear," she sighed, cuddling up in the corner of her lounge, "it is much more comfortable here than in bed, and I am not one bit sleepy. What wonderful adventures the knights of the Round Table did have! But I seem to have adventures too. The chief difference is that I don't gird on my armor and go in quest of them. I wonder if anybody has armor now-a-days. I do wonder."

Dorothy Ann thought of all her most adventurous friends, the Swan, the Polar Bear, the Rooster, the Fisher Boy, but none of them wore armor.

"I don't believe there is a single armor in town," she said aloud; "unless it is on the Turtle at Salem Square. He certainly wears something which looks like one."

The more she thought about him, the more cerain she was that he was the one Armored Adventurer in this city and the more she longed to discover how often he started out on his quests and where he went.

"I know what I'll do; I'll go ask him."

You may have noticed that it never takes Dorothy Ann long to do a thing after she has made up her mind, so that in a few minutes she was on her way over the hill toward Main Street. The blocks seemed much shorter at night than in the daytime, and she was surprised to find how quickly she reached the common. As she crossed it towards Salem Square, she saw that there was a struggle taking place on the watering trough between the Boy and the Turtle. The Turtle seemed to be trying to get away and the Boy to prevent his doing so.

"I can't hold him back much longer," said the Boy as soon as he spied Dorothy Ann. "I have held him all day, and the strain has been worse than usual so that my strength is almost gone."

"I always noticed that you seemed to be trying to keep him from getting away. Where does he want to go?"

"Oh, he is a great adventurer. See, he is girding up his armor now. He is a Sea Turtle and does not like staying out here in the street. In the daytime when the sun beats down upon him he is quite weak and I can easily hold him, but he gets stronger and bigger as night comes on. He has grown several inches since you last came down."

"Why, so he has!" said Dorothy Ann wonderingly. "He will surely get away from you now."

"Oh, no he won't," laughed the Boy mischievously. "When he is big enough I get on his back and go with him. I wouldn't trust him to come back in the morning, if he went alone. There will be room for you, too, if you would like to go along tonight. Here, crawl up on top the armor," he added, holding out his hand to her without waiting for any answer further than her dancing eyes.

In a minute she felt the Turtle move forward. She turned around in terror, thinking she was being carried off alone. But the Boy was taking a running jump and landed on the back of the Turtle just the way the boys who "push off" get on the end of double-runners in the winter when you think they will surely be left behind.

Down the street ran the Turtle, which had now grown quite enormous, all four legs going so fast you could hardly see them, his head bobbing up and down in front and his tail wagging from side to side in back.

"How did you and the Turtle ever happen to be at Salem Square?" asked



Dorothy Ann as soon as she got her breath after the first plunge. "And were you ever a real boy?"

"No, not what you would call real," he answered, with oh such a wonderful silvery laugh, which seemed to be made up of the singing of the birds, the rustling of the wind through the trees of a forest, the rippling of a brook, and the thousand and one murmurings of the woods, all blended together. "I am a faun."

Dorothy Ann looked around, not understanding him, at which that wonderful laugh again filled the air.

"Don't you know what a faun is? How ignorant you worldly children are! You

"Yes, except that he was a human baby at first and I never was. See, this wreath in my hair is as fresh and green as if it were still in the forest where it grew. Yet it has kept alive, even in the midst of the city, for months."

They were now getting near the seashore. Dorothy Ann took in great deep breaths of the salt air.

"You haven't told me yet how you and the Turtle happened to go to Worcester," she said.

"Several years ago," he answered, "a lady died and left some money to have a drinking trough made for the horses. The sculptor chosen to plan it knew he



"You are like Peter Pan," whispered Dorothy Ann softly.

see, a faun is not a child of the world of men; he is a child of the woods. I lived all my life until I came to Worcester among the trees of the forests. My friends were the animals and the birds. See how they recognize me for one of them."

As he said this he began to call with sounds as strange and musical as was his laugh. They were now going through a country road and, as he called, the birds woke from their sleep and flew in great flocks to the edge of the woods, answering him with a chorus of song. The bunnies popped out of their burrows, the squirrels came scampering over the stone walls, even the blind moles crawled up from their dark underground houses. Dorothy Ann glanced back at the Boy. His eyes were sparkling as if reflecting the light of the fireflies, his body swayed back and forth in answer to the calls of his friends like the graceful tops of poplars in a breeze, and his whole being seemed to laugh with the joy of outdoors.

"You are like Peter Pan," whispered Dorothy Ann, softly, as if afraid her voice would be a strange sound in this new world she was in.

must please the horses, so he came out into the woods where I was living and where he could get in touch with animals and learn their tastes better than in the city. It was there that I met him, and we straightaway became good friends. I promised to find him an animal for his fountain. Well, we looked everywhere, but none of them wanted to leave the country until at last we came across this Turtle, whose love of adventure made him jump at the chance of living in the city. Then, too, his armor gives him greater protection against the disasters that might befall an animal in the unnatural rush of Salem Square."

"But how did you happen to come with him?"

"Oh, the sculptor found that the novelty was going to wear off soon, and so it did. The Turtle enjoys being in the city for a little while each day, but then the wanderlust comes on and he wants to go explore new places. So the only thing was for me to come too, to hold him."

"But didn't you hate to leave the woods?"

"In a way," said the Boy. "But I felt so sorry for the thirsty horses that I was

glad to do it. Then, too, I like to watch the little human boys, who come constantly to play with me and my Turtle. And every night on my trips with him I can see my old friends and have adventures. So I really don't think I should like to go back to the woods now."

Just then Dorothy Ann looked up and saw they were almost at the ocean. Ahead of them was a high rock cliff, up which the Turtle moved faster when he saw the cool water so near.

"Oh, dear!" cried Dorothy Ann, in distress and alarm. "He will jump in and we'll all be drowned. Stop, Mr. Turtle, please, please stop, and let me off."

"Don't be afraid," said the Boy reassuringly. "We'll come up all right and it's lots of fun. It's just like a shoot-the-chutes, only better."

Nevertheless, Dorothy Ann caught her breath as the Turtle leaped off the cliff and went flying through the air. They struck the water with a splash and sank way down into the green regions below. After a few seconds they came up again and the Turtle, with Dorothy Ann and the Boy still clinging to his armor, went swimming back to the shore.

"There, wasn't that fun!" cried the Boy, his wonderful laugh echoing from one rick cliff to the next.

"I guess so," said Dorothy Ann doubtfully. "I think if I tried it again I should enjoy it more, because I shouldn't be scared next time."

What Dorothy Ann said was exactly true. Over and over again they climbed the rocks and jumped off. Each time it was more fun to go whizzing through the air than it had been the time before. Any "shoot-the-chutes" ever made was tame in comparison to it. After the first shock Dorothy Ann liked to strike the clear, cold water. Sometimes they landed on top of a wave, which broke about them into foam. While the foam floated off in all directions like a fleet of fairy boats, the turtle and his two passengers sank into the dark water below.

As Dorothy Ann's eyes became accustomed to the queer heavy look underneath, she could discover more and more strange fish swimming about her. It was like a new world of never-ending wonders, peopled with star-fish, sea urchins, fairy-like shells and swimming things of marvelous lights and colors. She would have liked to linger a few minutes to explore this new realm, if she had not been in such a hurry to climb the rock again and have the fun of going splash into the water. She was sorry indeed when the Boy said it was time to go back to Salem Square.

Hardly had she sat down on the lounge in her own room to think over her adventures when she heard the front door open and voices in the hall.

"Oh, mother, mother," she cried, running to the head of the stairs. "Come up quick, I want to tell you all about—"

"Why, Dorothy Ann," interrupted her mother, reprovingly, "aren't you in bed yet?"

"Oh, no; I've had such a splendid time with the Turtle, and the Boy who takes care of him—"

And before she went to bed Dorothy Ann had to tell her mother all about her wonderful adventure.

From The Cloud Bird (1916) by Margaret C. Getchell, with illustrations by Edith Ballinger Price. This book is in the public domain.

